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EDITORIAL SECTION

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Congress Fades From the Picture, Feeling It's a Tough Old World

BY N. O. MESSENGER.

Washington, November 26.

LIKE the Arab who folded his tent and as silently stole away, Congress departed from the seat of government to be absent until the first Monday in December, leaving the field of interest at the American capital in full possession of the eight friendly nations whose banners float with the Stars and Stripes on the buildings devoted to the purposes of the armament conference.

And could it not be truthfully said that for the next few weeks the attention of the whole civilized world will be drawn to this spot, whereon is centered the hope of civilization for minimization of the hazard of future wars and lessening of the burdens growing out of the last one?

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For of a verity, the swiftly occurring events of the past two weeks have given ample ground for entertainment of the lively expectation that civilization may not be disappointed in its hopes, and consequent warrant for continuing to bend its gaze upon Washington and the armament conference.

Officials and diplomats versed in the history of gatherings of this kind profess themselves amazed at the contrast between current performance and past record in the amount that has been accomplished and cut out to be finished.

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But to pause a moment before turning to the all-engrossing spectacle of the armament conference, which will from now on fill the public eye, to take a glimpse at the departing Congress, let's experience sympathy for that body. If Congress could speak in the vernacular, it would probably say with a sigh: "The Lord only knows what I have suffered in the past few weeks." And the republican party, could it be personified, might feelingly add, "The same here." And both plaints are justifiable. Both Congress and the republican party have been condemned up hill and down for delay in winding up what legislation has been enacted and for failure to do more than has been done.

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A publicity man of the democratic national committee, with a cynical disregard for the feelings of either Congress or the republican party, caustically avers that the administration is lucky in have the armament conference as a smoke screen to divert public attention from Congress and its record. Well, that is as it may be. As the late reverend Chief Justice White was wont ofttimes to observe, "there is much to be said upon both sides."

"However, the fact stands that Congress has passed the tax revision law, helped the farmers—or sincerely carried out the plans proposed by the farmers and claimed by them to be to their benefit—and having reached the end of a furrow, has knocked off work to get a breathing spell before starting another.

There is a vast field of legislative land awaiting when Congress next puts its hand to the plow.

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While professional politicians in both parties will make their charges and counter-claims about the efficacy of the tax legislation—the minority loudly proclaiming it as far short of filling the bill and the proponents as stoutly upholding it as the last word in beneficent legislation—the country will put it to the test of practical application.

Business and the individual will give it a tryout, and it is for the future to register the verdict of praise or censure, so the charges and claims can well be listened to with indulgence and promptly disregarded while the trying-out process is on.

For one thing all can be thankful—that the agony is over and the law has been written in terms and figures.

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The republicans, while admitting privately that the legislation is far from perfect, rely upon the spirit of American rsignation to the statutes made and provided to hold the majority party free from blame that might react unfavorably in the future. It is argued that the main thing has been accomplished—to give the country a change in the tax laws, and that inequalities will be grumbled at anl next forgotten.

The democrats do not propose to let the opposition off without a word, however, and from now on will seek to point out what, from their viewpoint, are the mistakes in the legislation and to create as much political capital as possible for their own benefit.

Maybe the psychology of the republicans is correct. You know the American people and how quickly they forget and pass on to something else.

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Anyhow, Congress will be back again in a couple of weeks, and just watch the public, especially if there should at that time be a lull in the proceedings of the armament conference, exclaim, "Good old Congress, welcome home again," and immediately begin to take notice of its proceedings and set about to pick flaws in its performances.

The old timers in Congress know exactly what to expect. They have been through the mill time and again, and when they come back will take a figurative position of getting ready to dodge brickbats. It has grown to be the custom of late years when anything is wrong to "take it out on Congress," just as it is when trouble comes up to run to Congress, like a child with a cut finger, for healing.

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It is said that some of the visiting foreigners expressed surprise the other day that there was not an overturn in the administration when the House of Representatives voted dead against President Harding's expressed wishes on the tax bill. They regarded that as a vote of lack of confidence, which in Europe would be followed by a change in the ministry, the dominant party resigning in a huff and a new set coming in.

Wouldn't the Americans have a hectic life if the cabinet and the President had to step down and out every time the administration got the worst of it in a vote in the House or Senate? And wouldn't Congress thereupon find its chiefest joy in making the administration turn handsprings? Some people are so sensitive.

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One may justifiably wonder if the American public will soon settle down to consideration of humdrum domestic questions after its present flyer in international subjects? Can it fix its mind upon so prosaic a thing as the tariff, wages and prices after following the fortunes of France, sympathizing with the troubles of China and pondering the mystical "agenda" of the world conference?

It has not been many months back when the average man couldn't have told you whether agenda was a new breakfast food or an automobile accessory.

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One educational benefit of the international conference is already apparent. The meeting has brought to Washington from Europe and Asia distinguished writers for the public press, thoroughly acquainted with all questions pertaining to the eastern and western hemispheres. Their writings are being "syndicated"—that is, published simultaneously in many newspapers, and it is not to be disputed that they are enlightening to a high degree to the American public.

The larger newspapers and the press associations have called in from foreign parts some of their best men, who are painstakingly and conscientiously informing the omniverous readers of the American newspapers of the ins and outs of overseas national politics.

True to the spirit of the American press, these thoroughly informed and capable men do not indulge in propaganda, but fairly and without prejudice state the facts as they find them.

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Overseas visitors say that one of the most surprising features of this conference has been the readiness with which the foreign delegations have fallen into the American habit of "telling it to the press." They contrast it to former international gatherings. Every day it is the custom for some one in authority in each delegation to meet the newspaper men and talk with great freedom about what is going on. They find that here, as at home, when they speak in confidence, and so announce, the confidence is maintained. The visitors say that they have discovered that American officials discuss with newspaper writers more intimately than is the custom abroad.

The foreign newspaper correspondents are as welcome at the conferences which President Harding and Secretary Hughes hold with the press as any one else, and there is no effort to discriminate against them.

15 SHIPS OF OLD NAVY TO GO ON AUCTION BLOCK

Several of Doomed Vessels Have Helped in Making of United States History.

Fifteen ships of the old navy will be put on the auction block soon, it was announced last night by the Navy Department. Several of them helped make American history, among them being the cruiser Brooklyn, flagship of Rear Admiral William S. Schley, during the battle of Santiago. Others are the cruiser Columbia, which in her prime was one of the fastest ships on the sea; the battleship Maine, which replaced the battleship of that name destroyed in Havana harbor; the battleship Missouri, launched in 1901; the cruiser Memphis, now a wreck on the San Dominican coast, and the torpedo boat Dale, which recently has been known as the Oriole while serving as headquarters of the Baltimore naval militia.

Four monitors on the list are the Miantonomah, the Ozark, formerly the Arkansas, and the Puritan, both of which have served as naval militia ships at Washington, and the Tonopah.

Other ships are the Intrepid, a steel training ship, rigged as a sailing craft; the Galatea and the Vega, steam yachts, used as patrol craft in the world war; the freighter Surprise and the destroyer Smith, built in 1900.

THE NEW AUSTRIAS

BY FRANCESCO NITTI,
Former Premier of Italy.

BEFORE the war Austria-Hungary was considered to be the mosaic of Europe. It was an historic formation which had gathered around the monarchy of the Hapsburgs, peoples of differing language, traditions, race and even religion; it was considered as a sort of political show, of many heads and many minds, incapable of having one united conscience, but obliged to follow united action under strong guidance.

In 1910 the monarchy had 51.3 million inhabitants on a territory more than double that of Italy and notably larger than that of France or Germany. It was the largest central European state and based itself on two groups of population, Germans and Magyars. According to statistics of languages, in 1919 there were in the empire 12,000,000 Germans, 10,000,000 Hungarians, 8,400,000 Bohemians, Moravians and Slovaks; 5,000,000 Poles, 4,000,000 Ruthenians, 5,500,000 Croats and Serbs, 1,300,000 Slovenes, 3,200,000 Rumanians, 800,000 Italians and Latins, 900,000 other nationalities, foreigners, etc. The dual monarchy was agitated by the most divergent currents: There were little separatist movements, in great measure promoted and maintained by Russia, and there were movements for autonomy in a larger feudal regime. The dual monarchy was on the way to become a triplice on account of the Slav tendencies, or that of some of the principle groups among them, to unite. Thus, as she was constituted, Austria-Hungary was considered as the greatest negation of the principles of nationality, but as an historical necessity.

Not only were the people of the monarchy different in nationality and language, but also in religion. By far the greater majority were Catholics of the Latin rite, 39,000,000; but there were 5,500,000 Catholics of the Greek and Armenian rite, 4,500,000 of the orthodox Greeks, and Armenians, 5,000,000 or thereabouts of evangelicals of different order, almost 2,500,000 of Jews and more than 600,000 Mussulmen.

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During the war the entente made several solomn statements which were in the nature of programs.

The allied governments made a collective declaration by means of Briand, then president of the council of ministers of France, to the ambassador of the United States on the 30th of December, 1916. They did not pay special heed to Austria-Hungary, although they spoke of the liberation of the Italians, Slavs, Rumanians and Czecoslovaks from the Austrian domination. Russia being at that time a united power, no reference was made to Poland; they limited themselves to saying that the intentions of his majesty the emperor of Russia regarding Poland were clearly indicated in the proclamation addressed to his army. It was a way to avoid compromising their relations with an ally like Russia, who had obtained, not only that she should go to Constantinople, but that she should enlarge her borders in Asia Minor. In his tenth proposed program, which became the fundamental document of the entente on January 8, 1918, President Wilson limited himself to declaring that the people of Austria-Hungary, whose position amongst the nations must be safeguarded and assured, should agree as to the freest opportunity for autonomous development. As to Poland, in the thirteenth proposal Wilson confined himself to declaring that it was necessary to have a Polish state with an undoubtedly Polish population, with free and safe access to the sea.

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As admitted by its chief author, the treaty of Versailles has been a means of continuing the war, and has brought to birth a number of states which are not nations, but which make so many Austrias, but with this difference that the populations held in subjection are the most cultured and the most intelligent, and therefore the least easily assimilated. Instead of one Austria, there are three or four Austrias, the difficulties of existence of which will shortly become intollerable. The fundamental pre-occupation of the treaty of Versailles was to distribute the greatest possible number of Germans to the less cultured populations, and reduce the great groups of Germans to such conditions of existence as should be intollerable, like that of the new state of Austria. A minor preoccupation was that of dismembering Hungary and reducing the Magyar state to an impotent condition.

Part of the German territory has also been given to states which did not take part in the war, and had never asked for this land.

Instead of an ethnical Poland, that is to say, of undoubtedly Polish population, a Poland has been formed which does not contain 18,000,000 or 19,000,000 inhabitants, but 31,000,000, of whom 8,500,000 are Ukrainians and Russians, and more than 2,000,000 are Germans. But of the 19,000,000 Poles 3,500,000 are Jews, who have never been assimilated, and perhaps are not capable of assimilation, and often subject to bitter rule. Thus the true Poles are in the minority, and yet they claim to occupy fresh territory, and obtain Upper Silesia also, in spite of the plebiscite.

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Jugoslavia, or as it is called, the state of S. H. S., has about 12,000,000 inhabitants on a territory not much larger than that of Italy; 5,000,000 are Serbs, a little less than 3,000,000 Croats, 1,000,000 Slovenes, 750,000 Mohammedans, 600,000 Macedonians, 600,000 Magyars, 700,000 almost of other nationalities. Before the Balkan war Serbia had less than 3,000,000 inhabitants; afterward it reached 5,000,000; from the ruin of Austria Hungary another 7,500,000 men have been taken; the central nucleus of Serbia has been quadrupled since 1913.

Czechoslovakia, which has arisen entirely from the ruins of Austria Hungary, is composed of a population which has given many proofs of seriousness, and give good promise for the future. They are the most cultured, most persistent and tenacious part of the Slav race. A Czechoslovakia of eight or nine million inhabitants would have formed a compact ethnical unit. Instead of this, they have been given 5,500,000 people of the most diverse nationality, among whom about 4,000,000 Germans, together with some of the most German cities in the world, such as Pilsen, Karlsbad, Reichenberg, etc.

German Austria has been reduced to 6,500,000 inhabitants and

(Continued on Third Page.)

How Charges of the Middlemen Hit Farmers and City Consumers

BY WILL P. KENNEDY.

THE farmer and the city man must get closer together.

The farmer, producing the food supply, and the city man, who must be fed, have a common interest to narrow the gulf of cost that is widening between the prices the farmer gets for his harvests and what the city consumer has to pay for what goes on the table.

In recent legislation it is noticeable that those representing the agricultural sections and those representing the urban centers seem to think their respective interests are antagonistic. Representative Simeon D. Fess of Ohio, who, by the way, is chairman of the republican congressional committee, thoughtfully points out that "the agricultural sections must look to the centers employing the labor of the country in industry for a market in which to sell the products of their farms."

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Investigations conducted by the joint congressional commission on agricultural inquiry, headed by Representative Sydney Anderson of Minnesota, have found that the high cost of living to city dwellers is due principally to cumulative costs between the time the food supplies leave the farm and their delivery in the city homes. This mounting cost is for the most part a labor cost, not only the cost of railroad labor, which is 55 per cent of the very high and sometimes prohibitive transportation charge, but labor all along the line—milk cart drivers, butchers, etc.

But to use the railroad labor cost as an illustration, it has been figured out that the wage bill on the railroads can be reduced a billion dollars, and still pay the employes 40 per cent more than they were getting in 1916, while reducing the transportation bill of the country 25 per cent.

The whole nub of the economic problem just now seems to be that wages is the one commodity that has not come down, and that they must come down before the business machinery of the country can run again with economic efficiency.

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Showing the effect of high freight rates on farm products, Representative Anderson has had prepared a set of charts representing the purchasing power of corn and wheat, which the farmer produces, in terms of agricultural implements, which the farmer has to buy, at various centers. It takes more than 4,000 bushels of corn at Culbertson, Neb., to buy four typical farm implements where it took less than 1,000 bushels in 1913. At Fargo, N. D., it took 3,000 bushels, as compared with 1,000 in 1913. At Syracuse, N. Y., it took only 1,500, as compared with 1,000 in 1913—showing the advantages of proximity to the seaboard.

If the farmer at Springfield, Ill., in 1913, purchased four typical farm implements, the entire freight bill involved in the transaction—including the haulage of the ore from the mine, the cost of moving the finished machine from the factory to the farm center, and the cost of shipping the corn to market to pay for the machine—was $71.60. In October, 1921, the same transaction would involve a transportation cost of $265.26. If he purchased them with wheat instead of corn it would have cost $66.82 in 1913 and $143.03 in 1921.

The same transaction at Kansas City would show, for purchase with corn, in 1913, $108.18, and in 1921, $480.37; for purchase with wheat, $102.77 in 1913 and $203.35 in 1921. Oklahoma City gives an extreme illustration; there the purchase in corn in 1913 would have cost $197.97 and in 1921 $1,238, and the same purchase in wheat would have cost in 1913 $189.12 and in 1921 $368.46.

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At a time when the question of railroad rates and wages has been brought to the attention of the people by a discussion of the railroad funding bill, and by the recent threatened strike of employes, Representative Parks, democrat of Arkansas, has made some illuminating remarks and presented interesting and valuable statistics. He asserts that when the peak of high prices was passed and every business was charging off its losses and endeavoring to begin anew, the railroads were the only concerns that refused to take their losses along with the rest. As a contributory cause of unemployment, he cites that the lumber industry in his state, giving employment to many thousands, has been almost destroyed on account of freight rates; that it cost as much to ship a carload of lumber as it does to manufacture the lumber and get it ready for shipment. He gave the following instances of shipments of fruit:

A carload of cantaloupes shipped to Pittsburgh sold for $586.20; freight, $361.16; after deducting drayage, commission, crating, etc., the grower received $38.17.

On a carload shipped to Chicago, which sold for $417.60, the freight, commission, etc., was $271.86, leaving $45.74 for the grower.

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Representative R. Walton Moore of Virginia has just had another instance called to his attention by a farmer who raises registered Holsteins at Orange, Va., only about seventy-five miles from the capital. He shipped a milk-fed calf to Washington. It took $20 worth of milk to raise it. The Washington commission merchant paid him at the rate of 5 cents a pound, or $11.95. Out of this he was charged 60 cents commission; freight, $5.58; express charges at Orange, $4.54, leaving the producer $1.23.

In testifying before a House committee investigating the milk supply of Washington, Representative J. D. Beck of Wisconsin, himself a dairyman, called some more specific instances to the attention of his colleagues. He pointed out that during the early days of the war the government appealed to the farmers of the northwest to throw their potatoes on the market, and suggested $1 a hundred pounds as a fair price, when they were really bringing $1.25. The farmers put their potatoes on the market as fast as they could be taken at $1, but the consumer in Chicago, 150 miles away, paid $4.50 for those same potatoes, and the commission men allowed thousands of bushels to rot or dumped them out along the railroad tracks to spoil.

Representative Beck continued: "What is the sense of a farmer in Texas selling cabbage at $20 per ton, that costs the consumer in New York, $240. A cargo of peaches shipped to a Chicago commission man from a farmer in Georgia didn't bring enough to pay the freight, but a second cargo sent by the same farmer to Chicago and sold direct to the consumers on a falling market brought $500 per car net. What is the sense of peas packed almost within a stone's throw of the city of Milwaukee yielding the packer 5 cents per can when that same can costs the consumer in Milwaukee 15 cents. What is the sense of our paying $8 to $12 for a pair of shoes when the farmers of my state are throwing away their hides for lack of a market? What is the sense of a barrel of apples yielding a farmer near Buffalo, N. Y., $3.50, going through seven different hands and costing the consumer in New York city $22.50 per barrel? There is just as much sense as my paying 15 cents a quart for milk here in Washington when a farmer out here on a hill in plain sight gets only 8 cents for it.

"The bureau of markets in Wisconsin recently made an investigation which shows that the milk distributors in the leading cities of that state returned in net profits one-third of their investmenet every year, and the filled milk interests returned 50 per cent of their actual invested capital every year. The producers supplying milk to the city of Chicago actually received $1.45 per 100 pounds, while it cost the consumers of that city $5.75 for 100 pounds."

Representative Beck urges that the farmers and their city cousins should be able to exchange their wares on a just and equitable basis, each to have sufficient of the products of his own and the other fellow's toil, without having to pay excessive toll to the fellow on the bridge between the farm and the city.

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"What's to be done about it?" I asked Chairman Anderson of the joint congressional commission on agricultural inquiry, and he said:

"The two principal elements interested in the cost of distribution are the producer and the consumer. In the first place, the cost of doing business piror to 1913 was steadily increasing and has about doubled since 1913. Those costs include sorting, grading, packing, bulking, transportation, hauling, storing, warehousing, selling, delivering and all the overburden of wages, interest, rent, insurance and general administration. All of these costs have increased.

"As we see it, the problem of reducing these costs is: (1) In elimination of waste in production and distribution; (2) in relating production to markets in such a way that overselling and overstocking will be avoided and to speed up the turnover; (3) in a general readjustment of costs—particularly wages, rent and interest—but other elements of cost as well.

"We think that along with this must go a readjustment of freight rates to correspond with a general lower level of prices of commodities.

"One of the elements of cost is the great variation of quality, quantity and variety of service, atmosphere and environment, that the consumer has come to demand. If the consumer telephones in to have a spool of thread or a loaf of bread delivered from one to five miles it increases the cost. If the consumer insists upon having facilities provided for writing letters while on a shopping tour he must expect to pay for it."

VISEING OF PASSPORTS TO SWITZERLAND TO END

Persons going from the United States to Switzerland will not be compelled to have passports vised after December 1, it was announced yesterday at the Swiss legation.

The decision to lift war-time restrictions on travel in Switzerland follows extensive agitation by business men of that country for removal of vises and lessening of severity in border regulations. The new law is not reciprocal in its application to Swiss seeking to enter this country.

LLOYD GEORGE—The Man and His Times

By Philip Kerr
(His Secretary, 1917-1920)

V.—Wilson, Lloyd George and the League of Nations.

IF Lloyd George and Clemenceau were the outstanding war leaders on the side of the allies, President Wilson was undoubtedly the spokesman of the idealism of the peoples. However opinions may differ as to his practical policy during the years 1914-19-18, no one will dispute that his war speeches were accepted as embodying the general popular idealism of the time.

Accordingly President Wilson came to the peace conference under a great advantage and a great handicap. Because he had expressed in words the hopes and dreams which had sustained millions in the daily torture of the trenches or the monotony of the worshop, he was regarded when he reached Europe as a sort of saviour. People paid no attention to the fact that he gained a minority of votes at the election of 1918. He was the President of the United States, he was its official representative, and, under the Constitution, he was the only person with whom foreign nations could negotiate. They looked to him, therefore, not only as the leading spokesman of the peoples, but as the chief guarantor that the peace would fulfill the expectations of mankind.

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Unfortunately the facts of everyday life and human nature do not coincide with the hopes of idealists. Married life seldom fulfills the confident certainties of courtship, and, in the case of the great war, the expectations, all the more extravagant because of the depth of suffering and anguish in which they grew, were foredoomed to disappointment. People had come to believe that they were fighting for an immediate millennium. The truth was that they were fighting to prevent the triumph of the darkness of militarism and autocracy, and that victory only laid bare the foundations on which a new and better international order could be constructed during many arduous years. The war constructed nothing. It simply left the edifice of autocracy and militarism in ruins.

Lloyd George, the more practical and experienced statesman, had a clearer appreciation of the realities of the case. President Wilson was more concerned with what ought to be, perhaps, than with what was practicable. Standing on Olympian heights, he discerned how the world of men ought to behave if peace and freedom were to reign on earth. But living in Washington, he was too remote from the passions and hatreds of Europe to realise how far the world of his speeches was from the practical possibilities of the day. Bernard Shaw long ago wrote a book called "A Handbook for Revolutionaries." In it he made the case for catastrophe revolution which, thanks to Lenin and Trotsky, is now familiar to everybody. He said in an epilogue that it was unanswerable. But even then he admitted a doubt: "I'm not sure," he said, "that the revolution in human nature is not the only revolution which will do any good."

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The revolution in human nature is, indeed, the only road to progress—as the founder of Christianity saw. And this revolution takes time to accomplish. It cannot be affected by the arguments of politicians or the treaties of statesmen. It comes from the gradual transformation of the human heart.

President Wilson slowly began to realize the facts as he visited the leading allied countries before the peace conference commenced. Col. House has told how horrified he was at the violence of the political passions of Europe. He saw that the feelings engendered by the injustice, oppression and bondage of a long and bitter past, and bursting forth at fever heat during the war, could not be suddenly composed in a few weeks. As he listened to the fierce speeches of the various national leaders, demanding this or that as their right, without any consideration of the essential unity of Europe, far less of the world, he gradually came to recognize that the dream he had entertained, and with millions of others, of a new world in which violence and recrimination should be no more and nations and individuals would settle their disputes in brotherly love, could not be brought to fruition immediately, but must be worked to gradually as the hatreds and misunderstandings of centuries died down and reason and justice and mutual confidence took their place. And as the prospect of this immediate new order faded away, the prospect of a league of nations to remedy in the future the defects—the inevitable defects—of the forthcoming treaty and to build gradually what could only be founded at Versailles, grew steadily in his mind. By the time he reached Paris for the conference it had taken the first place.

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I well remember one of the first speeches made at Paris by the President. It was on the occasion when he proposed the setting up of a commission to consider the formation of a league of nations.

"There are," he said, "many complicated questions connected with the present settlement which, perhaps, cannot be successfully worked out to an ultimate issue by the decisions we shall arrive at here. I can easily conceive that many of the decisions we shall make will need subsequent alterations in some degree, for if I may judge by my own study of some of these questions, they are not susceptible of confident judgments at present."

Here was the first note of warning that the millennium was still far off. I remember comparing it with the confident speeches and expectations of war and thinking what a tragic disillusionment it implied.

The President went on to say:

"It is, therefore, necessary that we should set up some machinery by which the work of the conference should be rendered complete * * * In coming into this war the United States never thought for a moment that she was intervening in the politics of Europe or the politics of any other part of the world * * * Therefore, the United States would feel that her part in this war had been played in vain if there ensued upon it merely a body of European settlements. We would feel that we could not take part in guaranteeing those European settlements unless that guarantee involved the continuous superintendence of the peace of the world by the associated nations of the world."

So President Wilson made himself the champion of the league of nations, presided over the deliberations of the league of nations committee, and made it probably his biggest single object at the conference to bring it into effective being.

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Lloyd George's attitude to the proposal for a league of nations was characteristically different. Lloyd George seconded the President's proposal and seconded it without reserve. But from his long experience as a practical politician he was not so confident as the President. To him the league was an experiment, one worth making, but still an experiment.

"I visited," he said, "a region which but a few years ago was one of the fairest in an exceptionally fair land. I found it a ruin and a desolation. I drove for hours through a country which did not appear like the habitation of living men afid women and children, but like the excavation of a buried province—shattered, torn, rent. I went to one city where I witnessed a scene of devastation that no indemnity can ever repair—one of the beautiful things of the world disfigured and defaced beyond repair. And one of the cruelest features to my mind was what I could see had happened: Frenchmen, who love their land almost beyond any nation, in order to establish the justice of their cause, have had to assist a cruel enemy in demolishing their own homes. Had I been there months ago I would have witnessed something that I dare not describe. Everywhere I saw acres of graves of the fallen. And these were the results of the only method, the only organized method, that civilized nations have ever attempted or established to settle disputes amongst each other. And my feeling was: Surely it is time, surely it is time that a saner plan for settling disputes between peoples should be established than this organized savagery. I do not know whether this will succeed. But if we attempt it, the attempt itself will be a success, and for that reason I should second the proposal."

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At the same time, as we shall see later, he felt that if the experiment of a league was to succeed it was essential that the powers should do something practical to demonstrate their own confidence in it and their own trust in one another. The mere signature of a high sounding document was not enough. Accordingly, he proposed that the powers should strengthen the league by coupling with it an agreement about armaments which would prevent competition between them.

Here is clearly brought out the difference between the two men. Lloyd George is always the practical statesman. His mind is instantly receptive of progressive ideals. He is ever to be found on the side of reform, but his plans are resolutely limited to what he believes the people are ready to accept, and his active support for reform is always conditional upon its being real reform and not high sounding camouflage. As a popular leader in his early life, he was reckless, because he saw that the changes he demanded were overdue and had overwhelming support. As a leader in war, though energy and initiative itself, he was more cautious, especially in securing unity of command, because he saw that the supreme necessity was to keep his own countrymen and the other allies united, and to carry them with him in whatever he wanted to do. At Paris he was more cautious still, because he realized that in the long tension of the war and the excitement of victory, people had got things out of perspective and wanted to achieve by strokes of the pen what could only be accomplished by the slow education of public opinion of many peoples.

That his insight was not at fault is shown by the behavior of every one of the great peoples of the world since the war.

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President Wilson's interests, on the other hand, were centered in the future. He saw what the unspeaking masses wanted—security from war. He saw that nothing, save real association of the nations to conduct together the world's affairs, could give it, and, ignoring or forgetting in his zeal the immense obstacles and practical difficulties in the way, and over-riding the political and personal factors in the situation, he endeavored, by a supreme effort of will, to shorten the years.

It is interesting to recall one instance of this determination, probably one which had as much to do as any with the subsequent failure of his plans. The usual practice of the peace conference was for the big four, as they came to be called—the representatives of France, the United States, Britain and Italy—to appoint international committees of experts or ministers to hear evidence about the principal problems before them and draft proposals for their criticism or correction. In this way the work of one body of men working continuously at the details of a question was revised and approved or rejected by the supreme body which had the shaping of the peace settlement as a whole. In the case of the league of nations commission, the other powers appointed delegates like Gen. Smuts, Lord Robert Cecil, M. Bourgeois and M. Venizelos to prepare the scheme, while President Wilson appointed himself. This meant that when the draft came to be considered by the council of four, it could no longer sit as an impartial judge of the work of the expert commission, fore one of its members had been chairman of that commission. In point of fact, the structure of the league was never seriously debated by the big four, and the text of the covenant never had the wide political experience and sagacity of M. Clemenceau and Mr. Lloyd George properly brught to bear upon it. Substantially, it was the handiwork of the league of nations commission and not of the council of four.

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It has often been said by his enemies that Lloyd George is not in favor of the league. That is a profound mistake. He has supported the supreme council during the last two years because he believed that a body consisting of the heads of the governments of the principal European powers were better qualified to deal with such problems as the disarmament of Germany, the exaction of reparations, the bolshevik invasion of Poland, and so on, than was the league of nations, which could not order armies to move and whose time was largely spent in deliberation.

But he is also convinced that the fundamental idea underlying the league is sound. If the world is not to drift into armed camps and the diplomacy of force, there must be some organization where the collective voice of mankind can find expression, where grievances can be ventilated, and where the representatives of the leading nations can be brought face to face with one another in order to concert measures for the protection of justice and the preservation of peace. If world unity and world peace is to be achieved, it will be through some such means as a league of nations, and simply to destroy the league would, in his judgment, be to destroy one of the best hopes of mankind.

He never thought, however, that the covenant was very well adapted to the conditions of the world as they were bound to be a year or two after the war. It was in his opinion too ambitious and too elaborate, and he thought an agreement against competition in armaments almost as important as the covenant itself. He was quite prepared to take the covenant as the basis from which to work toward something more practically effective, but it is an open secret that when it had become clear that the United States did not intend to take the covenant as it stood, Lloyd George hoped that it would call a conference to consider how the league could be remodeled so that it should be acceptable to America and better adapted to the needs of the world of every day, than this one drafted in the hothouse atmosphere of 1919.

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There for the moment the matter stands. Perhaps the Washington conference will pave the way for a reconsideration of the whole problem of international co-operation for peace. Lloyd George, reflecting accurately the mind of Great Britain, is for a league of nations. President Harding, speaking for America, is committed to an association of nations. France and Italy are both willing adherents. The league itself at Geneva has begun to make good in a useful sphere. The passions which centered about it have begun to die away. Both the supporters and the opponents of the covenant are saner than they were a year ago. Nobody now believes that the league can in itself save mankind. Nobody now believes that it can threaten the liberties and independence of its members.

The Washington conference, indeed, is in itself proof of the necessity of international gatherings of the leading statesmen of the world. If that conference succeeds, as we all must hope that it will succeed, in dispelling the dark political clouds that brood over the Pacific and the far east, and in paving the way for a reduction of armaments by land and by sea, the experience there gained may make possible the framing of a better and all embracing league. For it is only in responsible gatherings of the representatives of all the nations of the earth that that spirit of sympathy, tolerance and understanding can be born which will bring justice and lasting peace to men.

NEXT SUNDAY—The Peace Conference—Germany.